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SUBJECT: DRC ELECTIONS SITREP 2

¶1. (U) Polls in the Democratic Republic of Congo opened largely on time for the historic July 30 presidential and legislative elections. Turnout is reportedly high in the east and moderate in Kinshasa, and numbers could rise after morning church services. Observers report surprisingly well-organized polling stations with only minor technical problems. In Kinshasa, where the legislative ballot runs six pages, some voters have needed extra time to locate their candidates, and folding the large pages has proved difficult.

¶2. (U) No incidents of violence have been reported since polling began. However, in Eastern Kasai, two polling centers in Mwene Ditu were burned down overnight. In Mbuji-Mayi, the capital of Eastern Kasai, turnout has been low as expected after fliers threatening people who vote appeared throughout the city in recent days.

¶3. (U) Teams of mission observers, led by Assistant Secretary Frazer and including the Ambassador, DCM, PolCouns

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and others, began deploying at polling centers throughout Kinshasa and elsewhere in the Congo at 6:00 am and will observe throughout the day. Polls are expected to close at 5:00 pm local time, though counting could continue well into July 31.

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